

REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. Claims 39-68 are now present in this application, of which claims 39 and 57 are independent. By this amendment, claims 39, 44, 51, 57, and 63 have been amended.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statements filed on April 30, 2008, and September 10, 2008, and for providing Applicants with initialed copies of the PTO-SB08 forms filed therewith.

Examiner Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the personal interview that was conducted on January 23, 2009. An Examiner Interview Summary was made of record as Paper No. 20090123. During the interview, Applicants' representative discussed possible claim amendments and arguments to overcome the § 103 rejection of Chabanne. In particular, Applicants' representative proposed claim amendments to the independent claims and adding new claims 69 and 70. The subject matter of new proposed claim 69 has been incorporated into independent claims 39 and 57, and is believed to place the application into condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 39-68 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chabanne. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent

claim 39 has been amended to recite a combination of steps in a washing method in a washing machine including “supplying wash water to the wash tub from a water source,” “tumbling laundry in the wash drum by rotating the wash drum when wash water is in the wash tub,” “supplying water into a steam generator located in the cabinet through a water supply line that is connected to the water source and includes a valve to open and close the water supply line, wherein the water in the steam generator is separate from the wash water in the wash tub,” “generating steam by the steam generator,” and “supplying the generated steam into the wash tub through a steam supply line that is independent of the water supply line, the steam supply line extending downward from the steam generator and being in communication with the wash tub at an upper portion of the wash tub, while tumbling the laundry.”

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of steps as set forth in independent claim 39 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Chabanne, as discussed more fully during the Examiner Interview discussed above. In particular, Chabanne fails to teach or suggest “supplying wash water to the wash tub from a water source” and “supplying water into a steam generator located in the cabinet through a water supply line that is connected to the water source and includes a valve to open and close the water supply line, wherein the water in the steam generator is separate from the wash water in the wash tub.”

In addition, Chabanne also fails to teach or suggest “supplying the generated steam into the wash tub through a steam supply line that is independent of the water supply line, the steam supply line extending downward from the steam generator and being in communication with the wash tub at an upper portion of the wash tub.”

Independent claim 57 has been amended in a manner similar to independent claim 39. In particular independent claim 57 has been amended to recite a combination of steps in a washing method in a washing machine having a cabinet, a door connected to the cabinet at a front of the washing machine, a wash tub located in the cabinet, a wash drum located in the wash tub, the method including “supplying wash water to the wash tub from a water source,” “tumbling laundry by rotating the wash drum when wash water is in the wash tub,” “supplying water into a steam generator located between the cabinet and the wash tub through the water supply line that is connected to the water source and includes a valve to open and close the water supply line,

wherein the water in the steam generator is separate from the wash water in the wash tub, the steam generator being located above the wash tub,” “generating steam by the steam generator from the supplied water,” and “supplying the generated steam into the wash tub through a steam supply line that is independent of the water supply line, the steam supply line extending forward toward the front of the washing machine and then downward toward the wash tub, the steam supply line being in communication with the wash tub at an upper portion of the wash tub, while tumbling the laundry.”

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of steps as set forth in independent claim 57 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Chabanne, for the reasons described above. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that Chabanne does not teach or suggest “supplying the generated steam into the wash tub through a steam supply line that is independent of the water supply line, the steam supply line extending forward toward the front of the washing machine and then downward toward the wash tub, the steam supply line being in communication with the wash tub at an upper portion of the wash tub, while tumbling the laundry.”

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 40-56 and 58-68, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from one of independent claims 39 and 57, which are allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore these claims are also allowable based on their dependence from claim 39 or 57, as well as for their additionally recited subject matter. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

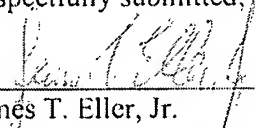
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Chad D. Wells, Registration No. 50,875, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: February 9, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

By 
James T. Eller, Jr.

Registration No.: 39,538
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicants

CDW